(d) the measures taken to stop such benami allotments of petrol pumps/LPG agencies initially allotted to SCs/STs?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) As per the elaborate mechanism provided for selection of dealers/distributors by the public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs), the chances of benami allotment of dealerships/distributorships, i.e., allotment of dealerships/distributorships to persons other than those who are selected for such dealerships/ distributorships, are little. However, the OMCs receive, from time to time, complaints against benami operation of dealerships, which are earmarked for Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe category. Such complaints are investigated by the OMCs and if the complaints are established, action is taken by the OMCs in line with the dealership/distributorship agreement. Information with regard to State-wise details of complaints of benami operation in respect of retail outlets (petrol pumps) and LPG distributorships is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(d) At the time of interview of the applicants, the documents furnished by them along with their applications are verified with reference to the original copies of the documents. Thereafter, on receipt of the merit panel of selected candidates, the oil company concerned conducts the field investigation in respect of the selected candidate. During this investigation, the factual data given by the candidate in his/her application is again verified.

In addition, the oil company officers, while inspecting the outlets frequently, monitor whether the signatories to the dealership agreements are managing the dealership personally. If any doubt arises, then bank documents, sales tax registration, income tax returns, retail selling licences and other relevant documents, etc., are checked to ensure that there is no benami operation. Whenever, any case of benami operation is detected, the matter is investigated and if this is established, action is taken by the OMCs.

IOC'S interest in overseas oil refineries

2298. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) proposes to buy a Turkish refinery;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether IOC has also submitted an expression of interest in other State-owned refineries abroad; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. IOC submitted an Expression of Interest/Pre-qualification Documents with the Privatisation Administration (PA) of Turkey on 14-6-2005 for acquiring 51% of the share capital of M/s. Turkish Petroleum Refineries Corporation (TUPRAS). The due diligence process is currently in progress. The binding bid will have to be submitted to the PA of Turkey by the 2nd September, 2005.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. In November 2003, IOC submitted an Expression of Interest for acquiring 51% or more of the shares of the Federal Government of Nigeria in each of the three Nigerian refineries, viz Kaduna Refinery & Petrochemical Complex; Port Harcourt Refinery Complex, and Warri Refinery & Petrochemical Complex. However, on a fresh assessment of the risks involved in the proposal, such as the uncertain pricing environment, the unclear regulatory framework and poor profitability of the downstream sector, IOC have decided that they should not pursue this investment opportunity.

National Mission on Bio-Diesel

2299. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that rising oil prices and uncertainties caused by geopolitical instability are the threats to import dependant countries like India with the possibilities of economic collapse;

(b) while welcoming the move of the Government to go for National Mission on Bio-diesel, what are the other efforts taken to encourage the States to go for culturation of Jatrophacurcas, as the issue of energy security had to be given top priority; and

(c) the States which are pretty serious of this process and what are the varied measures and assistance given to such States?